DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 383 295 IR 017 150

AUTHOR Eastmond, Nick; And Others
TITLE Lessons in Communication: Three Contract Ethnographies.
PUB DATE 95
NOTE 13p.; In: Proceedings of the 1995 Annual National Convention of the Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT), (17th, Anaheim, CA, 1995); see IR 017 139.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS American Indian Reservations; Case Studies; Child Development; Church Role; Communication (Thought Transfer); *Cultural Context; Elementary Education; Elementary Schools; *Ethnography; *Federal Programs; *Program Evaluation; Public Schools; *Social Science Research; Videotape Recordings
IDENTIFIERS California (Oakland); Kentucky (Louisville); Montana (Ronan); *Site Visits

ABSTRACT

Ethnography, the preferred method of inquiry of the cultural anthropologist, is currently the most widely recognized qualitative method for research. Defined as the "art and science of describing a group or culture," it provides a means of studying and understanding other groups, their values and culture. This study documents the use of a permutation of that method, called "contract ethnography," where a trained professional enters a culture for a limited period of time with a limited set of questions. Three programs funded by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) are examined: (1) the Creating Lasting Connections (CLC) Project based upon church involvement in Louisville, Kentucky; (2) the Beyond Blue Bay (BBB) Project located on an Indian reservation in Ronan, Montana; and (3) the Child Development Project (CDP) based in public elementary schools headquartered in Oakland, California (with a second site visit to Louisville, Kentucky). Each of the two-person site-visits occurred during the third of five years of federal funding. One team member was a senior staff member of the Washington, D.C.-based consulting firm, CSR, Inc., termed the "Site Evaluator," and the second, a person trained in techniques of contract ethnography, called the "Site Visitor." Two parallel reports were written for each project, focusing upon different aspects of the project. Communication lessons that can be drawn from the promotional videotapes developed during the project are also examined. (Contains 13 references.) (Author/AEF)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

ED 383 295

Title:

Lessons in Communication: Three Contract Ethnographies

Authors:

Nick Eastmond, Professor
Dept. of Instructional Technology

Reba Teran, Graduate Student
Dept. of Instructional Technology

Trisha Poleski, Graduate Student
Dept. of Psychology

Utah State University
Logan, Utah 84322-2830

IR017150

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

S. Zenor

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)"

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Lessons in Communication: Three Contract Ethnographies

Abstract

Ethnography, the preferred method of inquiry of the cultural anthropologist, is currently the most widely recognized qualitative method for research. Defined as the "art and science of describing a group or culture" (Fetterman, 1989, p. 11), it provides a means of studying and understanding other groups, their values and culture. This study documents the use of a permutation of that method, called "contract ethnography," where a trained professional enters a culture for a limited period of time with a limited set of questions. In the case of this study, three programs funded by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) are examined: (1) the Creating Lasting Connections (CLC) Project based upon church involvement in Louisville, Kentucky; (2) the Beyond Blue Bay (BBB) Project located on an Indian reservation in Ronan, Montana; and (3) the Child Development Project (CDP) based in public elementary schools headquartered in Oakland, California (with a second site visit to Louisville, Kentucky). Each of the two-person site-visits occurred during the third of five years of federal funding. One team member was a a senior staff member of the Washington, D.C.-based consulting firm, CSR, Inc., termed the "Site Evaluator," and the second, a person trained in techniques of contract ethnography, called the "Site Visitor." Two parallel reports were written for each project, focusing upon different aspects of the project. The first author of this paper served as the Site Visitor on each of these three projects, attempting to document aspects of the local culture and its relation to the operation of the specific program. Because each of these projects had developed its own 6-8 minute promotional videotape, this paper examines communication lessons that can be drawn from these video presentations.

The Method

Ethnography has enjoyed wide acceptance as a qualitative method of inquiry. With expositions provided by Clifford Geertz (1973), David Fetterman (1988, 1989) and others, the method has been widely adopted as a methodology for study in education, health, and other social science areas. In many ways, ethnography can be considered the "grandfather" of other qualitative methods in use. In fact, one problem of qualitative methods today is that for many people, "qualitative inquiry" is synonymous with "ethnography"(Lancy, 1993).

The strengths of ethnography come from its grounding in extensive observation over long periods of time, its adoption of the "insider's" (emic) perspective, its "value neutrality," and its ability to detect fine differences in culture. A major difficulty with ethnography is the relatively long periods of time required on location. While such grounding in the culture may be necessary to write a book-length definitive study, as this methodology has been employed by U.S. government agencies, the extensive lengths of time required have entailed expenses that are prohibitive. Deslonde (1981) reports on a nationwide study where full-time data collectors used ethnographic techniques to study the multiple sites of a national project for a full year. Eastmond, one of the authors of this paper, has been employed one-fourth time over the past 4 years as an ethnographer-in-residence to study a federally funded experiment in child development (the Comprehensive Child Development Project), at one of 36 implementation sites nationwide. To date, however, not many projects have been willing to devote that level of resources to ethnographic inquiry. Clearly, given current funding trends, there is a need for a method that allows for the same kind of qualitative insights without the huge investment in time and effort required by full ethnography.

A promising development for many situations has been entitled "contract ethnography" and involves a more focused effort over a shorter period of time. This kind of inquiry goes under several names, two others being "case study research" and "microethnography." For this paper, the approach will be termed, "contract ethnography." An important feature of this form of study, as the name implies, is the use of contractual arrangement in designing and conducting the study. The contractual arrangement calls for examination of a limited set of questions, applied to a specific program. While retaining many of the techniques and assumptions of traditional ethnography, this approach allows more rapid entry and exit from a particular project, building upon the notions of expertise espoused by Eisner (1991).

For this paper, the contract ethnographer was Nick Eastmond. When references to "I" or "we" are made, it is to Eastmond or to the particular site visit team. Other terminology used is that in current use at the sites visited, for example, both "Native American" and "Indian" are used by various people at the Montana site.

Contract Ethnography for CSAP

The studies reported here were part of a national cross-site evaluation conducted for the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) of 90 selected high risk youth (HRY) demonstration grants funded in fiscal years 1989, 1990, and 1991 in different parts of the United States. Each of these projects targetted high risk youth (HRY) in attempting to prevent their abuse of alcohol and other drugs (AOD). The purpose of the site visits and subsequent reports was to "understand each grantee's basic assumptions in selecting and organizing its interventions, to determine how the program operates, and to reveal factors that are viewed as critical to successful outcomes." Initially, the inquiry sought to identify 10-12 highly successful "lighthouse" projects, but after the first year this expectation was dropped, presumably due to unhealthy competitive pressures that resulted among projects.

The approach required that two outsiders visit ongoing projects during their third year of a five-year funding cycle. The two outsiders, one called the "Site Visitor" (Eastmond in this report) and the other the "Site Evaluator", spent up to 10 days visiting the site. The "site visitor" had responsibility for reporting the local culture -- issues, trends, and values -- that impinge upon the workings of the prevention project, while the "site evaluator" had responsibility for documenting the third party evaluation effort.

In contract ethnography, the investigator (here the "Site Visitor") spends a limited amount of time on site, usually one week to ten days in the CSAP projects. A set of general questions are provided by the funding agency to guide the inquiry. Typical questions would be:

- What are the magnitude, distribution, and character of the target groups [for the program] in the community?

- What are the values, culture, and norms of the program's target population? What implications do these values, culture, and norms have on the High Risk Youth program feasibility and target group participation?

- What are the major political and social issues in the community, and how have these issues affected the services and support networks existing prior to the High Risk Youth program? (CSR, Inc., 1992).

It should be noted that investigating the questions above could provide the basis for one or more books on the subject; however, to be useful, a more truncated response was expected. While members of a community might be aware of hundreds of local issues, the Site Visitor might examine only three or four, but those would be the three or four seen as most crucial and most relevant to the project at hand. Although the people on site frequently suggested the issues they felt were crucial, the final selection of issues to highlight necessarily remained with the Site Visitor, as did editorial control of the written document.

Part of the job requirement for this kind of work is that only a specific amount of time is alloted to do the work. For the three reports examined here, the allotted number of person-days was fourteen, with one week to 10 days on site and the remainder in analyzing and writing up the results. Where information was missing, it could be supplemented by later followup telephone interviews to the site. The three reports considered here were extensive, with the number of typewritten pages varying from 27 in the edited version for the CLC Project to 74 pages (unedited) in the CDP.

These studies necessarily rely on the basic assumptions of qualitative research -- namely, that the researcher is by definition the best means of gathering information, and that judgment and expertise must be exercised in doing so. In the last analysis, however, the report is the work of a single researcher and is colored by the background and perspective of that person. The contract ethnographer attempts to be candid about observations, but also to be fair in assessing all factors, motives and constraints operating on and within a program.]

In gathering data, these studies make use of the qualitative research techniques employed by ethnography, including participant observation, interviews with persons both inside and outside of the program, analysis of grantee records and reports, and a sampling of local med a sources. Questions arising in the earlier stages of the research are refined and, where necessary, revisited.

One final consideration is that here are times in contract ethnography when the questions posed by the funding agency seem less relevant at the particular site than they might be at others. In the experience doing the CSAP contracts, when a conflict arose between the prepared questions and the contract ethnographer's instincts on-site of what was important, it was always possible to pursue the researcher's questions. While the funding agency might fault a report on omitting an answer to a question (and simply saying "Findings indeterminate" or "This answer is covered in Section X in the report" would be sufficient), in no case did the funding agency raise questions as to the relevance of the findings provided.

When the report did get back to the grantee, after extensive editing by the consulting firm and perusal by the CSAP project officer in Washington, there could be matters of fact or interpretation that would be negotiated between the Site Visitor and the grantee. The procedures for "member checking" advocated by Lincoln and Guba (1985), where stakeholders conduct a preliminary reading of the draft and negotiate the acceptable version with the qualitative researcher, were not acceptable to the funding agency and were not followed here. Because continued funding did not depend upon anything in either the Site Visitor or the Site Evaluator reports, and because the project officers took the stance that they wanted the unedited account of site visitors straight from the field, the kind of negotiation with the grantees over report content was curtailed.

In no instance did the kind of conflict reported by Bell and Jankowiak (1992) surface in this work. These anthropologists report a persistent difficulty in contract ethnography work when a local person, perceived as an expert by the community, clashes in interpretation with the visiting contract ethnographer ("the folk expert vs. the ethnographer). A reason for this lack of conflict may have been the mandate provided by the funding agency, putting the outsiders in a position of less vulnerability, combined with the reporting requirements that introduced a time lag between the site visit and the grantees receiving the report. Because the reports have not yet been made public, to say nothing of being widely disseminated, there has been little conflict to date over findings. McKenna (1994) has reported on the kinds of role conflicts that this kind of work poses for persons trained in traditional ethnography.

Reports on the projects used a variety of methods of analysis and reporting, to include (1) extensive use of photographs taken on site and in the local community; (2) maps of the larger geographic area and of the particular project sites; (3) cartoons, news clippings, sometimes drawn from the project's own "clip file", what Fetterman calls "outcroppings"; and (4) charts and diagrams similar to those advocated in Miles & Huberman, 1994. Examples of the latter are shown as Figures 1 and 2 of this paper, patterned after the "Case Dynamics Matrix" (pp. 148-151). These figures provide a more efficient means of comparing the three projects under consideration.

Introductory videotapes. The contents of the project videos will be described in the sections that follow, but at this point it is necessary to state how and when they were encountered, since that event varied for each project. For the first project, the CLC in Kentucky, the video did not exist at the time of the site visit in 1992. It was a bit of additional information gathered two years later at the time of the site visit to the Jefferson County-based CDP Project, also located in Louisville. Consequently, the CLC video, unlike the other two, was only viewed after-the-fact, after the Site Visitor report had been written. The video for the BBB project in Montana was first shown to the site visit team during a staff meeting on the second day of the visit. Because the video was an artifact that could be taken away and examined later, it became an important source consulted in completing the Site Visitor report. The CDP video was first mentioned in conversation during the site visit in Louisville, flippantly as "Our six minute video that really takes 8 minutes." However, it was not something that we actually viewed until our visit 2 weeks later to the DSC headquarters in Oakland, California. At that time, we watched it with the project's Research Director as an introduction to the concepts behind the project. Again, the video was an artifact that could be taken from the site, and it was a source reviewed in completing the Site Visitor report.

In the analysis of the project videos described in the remainder of this paper, the key issues were identified by three people: the Site Visitor (Nick Eastmond), a graduate assistant for qualitative research (Tamara Walser), and a Native American co-presenter and graduate student in Instructional Technology (Reba Teran). While watching the project videos, each person identified issues individually, but these were discussed collectively afterward to determine 2-3 ones to highlight. This event occurred well after the writing of the three Site Visitor reports.

The Projects

CLC Project: Louisville, Kentucky

The first project studied was the Creating Lasting Connections (CLC) Project in Louisville, Kentucky, with the site visit taking place from July 25-31, 1992. CLC is a project undertaken by COPES, Inc. (Council on Prevention and Education: Substances, Inc.), a nonprofit organization providing alcohol and other drug (AOD) prevention services in the Louisville area for over a decade. Working through the congregations of local Protestant and Catholic churches in both the African American and White communities, the project set up recruitment teams and later training sessions for both parents (24 weeks) and teenage youth (8 weeks). The sessions focused upon parenting skills and improved communications and culminated in the convening of joint activities where sharing between parents and their teenagers could take place.

As outsiders, the site visit team attended training sessions at both rural and urban sites, to include a planning meeting of the congregational team responsible for implementing training in the inner city area of the Louisville West End. The team interviewed youth, parents, staff and advisory council members, as well as access project records and research reports. Important issues summarized in Figure 1 are described in more detail as follows:

(1) **Safety net philosophy:** The project believed in building positive communication experiences between parents and their teens. However, given the possibility of opening up major conflicts and then lacking the resources to handle them, the CLC project had retained the part-time services of a counseling psychologist. Any workshop participant failing to attend a session would receive a follow-up phone call to insure that any lingering problems could be dealt with through counseling. The motto was: "We don't pick scabs," i.e. we don't open past wounds and then lack the means to remedy the situation.

(2) **Strong leader:** The project's Executive Director, Mr. Ted Strader, was well known in drug abuse prevention circles as a person with strong ideas and plans to carry them out. During the first day on site, this model for strong leadership was apparent. The project, in fact, had served as a training ground for prevention professionals, studying under Mr. Strader and then being hired off by other agencies. The down side of strong leadership was that some people reacted personally against this approach, and so there were some antagonistic forces in the community to be reckoned with. People involved in the program, however, developed strong feelings of loyalty both to Mr. Strader and to the project.

(3) **Resiliency factors of church attenders:** Because this project drew upon members of existing church congregations and because involvement with organized religion is considered as one "strengthening factor" in predicting probable involvement with alcohol or other drugs, it could be argued that this project was working with people predisposed to succeed. However, interviews with many participants provided convincing evidence that the AOD struggle was a major one for them or for their loved ones. The CLC Project staff members' argument was that beginning with one factor in their favor meant that families would more likely stay through to completion with the intense program (24 weeks of evening meetings -- one per week -- for parents, 9 weeks of similar meetings for their teenagers, with meetings lasting 2-3 hours each time). Working with the members of the congregations seemed to provide an effective way of obtaining and maintaining loyalty of participants. Using this ingenious approach secured the willing participation of congregation members. Pastors and clergy of the churches saw CLC involvement as a way to prevent AOD problems and at the same time build feelings of unity among congregational members.

CLC Project video: The introductory video for the project was produced and directed by the Project's Executive Director, Mr. Ted Strader. Some of the most convincing arguments in favor of the project were

provided by direct statements by Mr. Strader. Other parts of the video included actual footage from training sessions involving parents sharing feelings of both love and concern for their children. The emotional impact of the testimonials is strong. Viewers quickly perceive the strong commitment of participants toward the value of the project and its positive impact on their lives.

The presentation may cause some individuals to question whether they could be that open and forthright about personal family problems, but the modeling from the people pictured suggests that many people have benefited from these sessions. Another concern is whether the project will be in existence long enough to handle whatever problems were uncovered. One lasting impression of this site visitor could be paraphrased in Mr. Strader's words during an interview: "This project is here to stay. We have been here a decade, and regardless of the funding we receive from the Feds, we will be here for at least that long in the future." That argument seemed to be a powerful one in convincing both ministers and lay members that this project had a long-term commitment to AOD prevention.

Beyond Blue Bay Project: Ronan, Montana

The second site visit, November 7-13, 1993, was to the Beyond Blue Bay (BBB) Project on the Salish-Kootenai Reservation in northern Montana. The current project built upon the legacy of a previous program of substance abuse prevention at the Blue Bay Healing Center on Flathead Lake. In the followup project (BBB), however, the program's emphasis was upon community development activities in six of nine reservation communities, with plans in place to expand to the remaining 3 communities in the final project years. The program attempted to strengthen resilience factors based in the traditional values of the Native American community, helping youth gain a more clear understanding of their heritage and better appreciation of their cultural roots through a variety of activities.

In addition to the Site Visitor and Site Evaluator, a Navajo woman, Trisha Poleski, was part of the site visit team. Although she had never visited this particular reservation before, her insights into the problems faced by Native Americans and her help in sensitizing the other two outsiders was invaluable. She was frequently able to examine cultural practices on this reservation in light of her own experience with the Navajos and suggest a new way of looking at the particular situation. She was also able to make suggestions on the draft report that made substantial differences in tone and content.

BBB Project Issues

Issues that surfaced during the visit, worth consideration now were as follows:

(1) **Community/tribal divisions**. During the early 1900's the tribal lands of the Flathead Reservatrion were opened to homesteading, with the result that Caucasians now outnumber Indians by a ratio of 3:1 (The 1990 census lists 21,259 persons living in the Flathead Reseervation area, and of these 5,130 or 24% are listed as Indian). From a reading of two local papers, the Lake County Leader in Ronan, with a primarily white audience and the Char-Koosta News in Pablo, read mainly by the Native American community, it was clear that community divisions exist and that the points of view of the two groups are often quite different. In addition to those differences, the combining of the two tribes, the Salish and the Kootenais, appeared to be a historical move on the part of the U.S. Government. The two groups have different languages, different tribal customs, and often different outlooks on their common issues. Designing a project that could include elements of both tribal groups, as well as both Whites and Native Americans, which this project has attempted to do, should be considered a major feat. In many ways visible to us as observers, the project was able to benefit all groups. For example, community development efforts were conducted in both predominately Salish and Kootenai area. Programs like the "Soaring Eagles" drumming groups for youth were open to both Native American and white youngsters. The survey of drug and alcohol use among teenagers, conducted by a California consulting firm and funded by the project, had purposely worked through the public schools to obtain results that would be useful to administrators in schools for both whites and Indians.

(2) **Fostering Native American culture in small populations**. Both Salish and Kootenai tribes had their separate cultural centers, and elements of the BBB Project were organized to foster

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

their growth. It became clear that these languages, particularly Salish, was now spoken by only a handful of people, and that unless work was done to teach it to the youth, that these languages would completely die out. Because of Bureau of Indian Affairs and other government policies during the 1950's, the "melting pot" notion, encouraging (and enforcing) assimilation into the Anglo culture at any price, the price of survival for many was turning their back on Indian ways. To combat alcohol and other drugs, a sense of heritage is seen by these people as a particularly effective factor in resiliency. Learning how close these languages were to complete extinction put a note of urgency in the attempts to build language skills and foster cultural appreciation among the youth.

BBB project video: This filming was completed by a camera crew from the University of Wisconsin, while filming a longer documentary. Project staff used a short segment of the longer production as a way to represent their project to outsiders. Having outsider narration but tribal members testimonials enhanced credibility. The emotional impact of the video is strong, emphasizing the devastating effects of alcoholism among the local people and pointing to the Beyond Blue Bay Project as one ray of hope in turning the situation around. The project provides persuasive testimonial of how the cycle of negativism and shame, reinforced by alcoholism, can be broken. Its emphasis upon healing, through traditional Indian ways, suggests a positive basis for action.

The Child Development Project: Oakland, California

The third project, the Child Development Project (CDP) of the Developmental Studies Center based in Oakland, California, operated through the elementary schools in six locations nationwide: three in California and three funded by CSAP in White Plains, New York; Dade County, Florida; and Jefferson County, Kentucky. The program trained teachers in three innovative practices: cooperative learning, literature-based writing, and developmental discipline. The project worked to train teachers to use new and more democratic teaching methods to build responsibility in students.

Our site visit went to the two schools implementing this model in the Jefferson County School District in Louisville, Kentucky (March 12-17, 1994) and then to the Developmental Studies Center in Oakland, California (March 22-25, 1994). The visit to Jefferson County was timed to coincide with training for teachers in aspects of the CDP model. Most impressive in this training was the way that local teachers, designated as part of the implementation team (I-Team), were capable of conducting a complex workshop for their peers.

The CDP was the largest and most fully developed of the projects visited. The staff in Oakland was impressive in both their credentials and dedication, acting on a scale of curriculum reform that is rare in public education. The program proposed is extensive and sophisticated. Most teachers interviewed were enthusiastic about it, for its prosocial values and its emphasis upon creating a "caring community." Values of free expression, mutual respect for members of diverse groups and community service were evident. But becoming expert in its implementation is not a trivial task; to teach in this way requires extensive training and practice.

Issues:

Specific issues examined were:

(1) **Interface of the Project with KERA.** The schools in Kentucky are undergoing an extensive program entitled the Kentucky Educational Reform Act (KERA), fostering ungraded primary grade classes and extensive testing of student progress. The program is complex, but provides each school with specific goals for student achievement and a "carrot and stick" approach to make schools accountable. Schools meeting or exceeding their goals are given more latitude in governance and are provided with extra funding to be used in ways the teachers specify. Schools not meeting their goals are required to develop a plan for turning the achievement patterns around, and if continually unsuccessful, may have new leadership imposed upon them from the outside. Implicit in the KERA reform is the notion of progress, that each year's students ought to be progressing more closely toward the ideal level of achievement. Thus, the goals are engineered to become progressively higher with each school year.

The CDP project has been implemented independently of, and at times in spite of KERA. Where KERA is specific on goals but leaves the program to reach those goals up to the educators, CDP provides a concrete set of steps to make education better. At the time of the site visit, both project schools had been cited as "meeting goals," while one of the two comparison schools had not. While not billed as a panacea for KERA, CDP has been accepted by the Jefferson County School District as worthy of expansion to 26 elementary schools beyond the original two at the time of this site visit.

(2) **Recess time for children.** At the schools visited for this study, in part because of concerns about liability for children left unsupervised on the playground, the current school policy encourages teachers to take their children outside for a supervised activity for 20 minutes during the day, but otherwise does not allow time periods for free play. While this policy is privately opposed by many CDP staff from California, it illustrates the limits that school-based program originating from outside of the state must abide. Apparently, the same policy regarding recess is in effect in the project schools in Dade County, Florida, although they were not visited in doing this report. "Because the children have grown up not knowing about recess," noted one staff member, "they don't know what they are missing." There are times, however, when instruction could probably be more effective if the children were able to take out time for free play.

(3) **Fidelity to the project model.** As mentioned above, in the time since the site visit, Jefferson County District has chosen to expand parts of the model to 20 additional schools and all of the model to 6 new schools. Because the behaviors expected on the part of teachers are complex, and a degree of encouragement and coaching is required, the rapid expansion will test the abilities of the I-Team members, since they now become the trainers, and the administrative staff locally and in Oakland. While being recognized as worthy of massive expansion is certainly commendable, the new phase will test logistics and training capacity to the limits.

CDP Project Video:

This introductory video, entitled "Creating Caring Communities of Learners," differs considerably from the two previously described. Where those for CLC and BBB rely upon testimonials, this one simply shows children learning in a classroom where the CDP model has been implemented. The close-up views of children actively engaged in learning is most convincing, with camera work that is remarkable in catching of subtle elements of conversation between children working as partners. The feeling conveyed is of a calm, nurturing atmosphere, the kind of setting that most parents would want for their child. The video leaves the observer with the unstated questions: "Is it possible for every child in school to have this kind of positive experience?" and "Could educational reform really provide this kind of education for all children, in a setting that seems to minimize the negative side of competition?" While a major portion of CDP Project effort has gone into the training and coaching of teachers, the video's focus upon the children's learning shows convincingly what the ultimate result of this project is intended to be.

Overall communication lessons.

Several lessons can be drawn from a close analysis of the introductory videotapes for these CSAP projects:

1. **Prevalence of video.** As a beginning, it is noteworthy that each of these projects had chosen independently to develop an explanatory video about their project. There was apparently no mandate from Washington or program incentive of any kind, but the leadership of each of these projects felt the need to tell its own story using a video format. That finding may say something about the expectations of visitors to federally funded projects in the 1990's, when video technology is within the range of most budgets and when the primary information source for many people is television and video. As one project administrator stated: "Our videos have become an increasingly important part of our efforts to describe the 'vision' over the years. We have never been able to convey what we are about as clearly in words as it comes through seeing it 'in action.'" Certainly this medium allows a representation of the project in dimensions that are not possible with brochures or research reports (which all three projects had as well).

2. **Impression management.** The project videos should be seen as a form of "impression management" that all of us engage in, putting our "best foot forward" as we are introduced to new people or shown in new situations. This process should not be construed as being dishonest, but rather as being

discrete and selective of the details to present in introducing the project and in what order. The projects clearly want to tell their stories, and they do so by assembling a collage of video impressions for the newcomer. They are accurate in their portrayal of people and events in the sense that they attempt to be truthful, but producers generally work to convey the positive aspects of their projects. The negatives and caveats can come later, for the person who cares enough to investigate in more detail.

3. **Selection of issues to highlight**. The issues brought out in the videos are sometimes similar but often very different from those reported by the contract ethnographer after receiving a week or more of exposure to the project on site. In only one case, the BBB Project in Montana, could it be argued that watching the project video had some influence on issue selection by the Site Visitor, since the viewing occurred early in the site visitation process. Differing views on the issues are to be expected, although if the aim is to represent the project from an "emic" or insider's perspective, one would expect that there would be some congruence between issues selected. As can be seen from Tables 1 and 2, there is some convergence in issue selection, notably with the BBB Project, but possibly more divergence in issue selection than one might have expected. However, in some cases, the differences may simply reflect word choice and semantics. For example, for the CDP Project the issue of schools being overly competitive is the essential question behind the concern with the Kentucky School Reform Act (KERA).

4. **Emotional tone.** In each case, the message contained on the video provided an explanation but had clearly been designed to hook the viewer emotionally: in CLC with the power of honest expression between teenagers and their parents, in BBB with the gravity of alcohol's devastating effects in Native American populations, and in CDP with the excitement of children learning cooperatively in an enriched educational environment. There is little that could be called "preaching". The people speak for themselves in convincing ways. It would be difficult to watch these videos passively, without experiencing some emotion. Each in its own way works at persuading the viewer that the perspective of this project to AOD prevention is valuable.

Notes:

The reports described herein were completed with funding from the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP). The authors wish to express appreciation to the Project staff on each of these sites for their hospitality and openness, as well as permission to use the videos from their respective projects. CSR staff members Anne Kennedy, Chris Ringwold, and Ping Yu served as Site Evaluators to the various sites, and their insights shared in conversation and in writing were invaluable in forming these conclusions. And finally, Drs. Michael Reed and Sherri Aiken were instrumental in obtaining the permission for this reporting to occur.

A version of this paper is being submitted for journal publication in *Evaluation and Program Planning*.

Additional copies of the article are available by request from Dr. Nick Eastmond, Dept. of Instructional Technology, Utah State University, Logan, UT 84322-2830. Tel. (801) 797-2642, FAX (801) 797-2693, or Internet: NEAST@CC.USU.EDU.

Sources:

Bell, J. & Hankowiak, W.R. (1992). The Ethnographer vs. the Folk Expert: Pitfalls of Contract Ethnography. *Human Organization*, 51(4), pp. 412-417.

Bogdan, R.C. & Biklen, S.K. (1992). *Qualitative Research for Education: An Introduction to Theory and Methods.* Boston.: Allyn & Bacon.

CSR, Inc. (1992). *Office for Substance Abuse Prevention, High Risk Youth Demonstration Grant Program: Site Visitor Reports Training Guide.* Washington, D.C.: CSR, Inc. (October, draft version).

Deslnde, J.L. (1981). *Ethnography and Case Study Methodology: An Approach to Large Scale Policy Studies of Federal Programs.* (ERIC ED 204 389).

Eisner, E. W. (1991). *The Enlightened Eye: Qualitative inquiry and the enhancement of educational practice*. New York: Macmillan.

Fetterman, D. M. (Ed.)(1988). *Qualitative approaches to evaluation in education: The silent scientific revolution.* New York: Praeger.

Fetterman, D. M. (1989). *Ethnography step by step*. Newbury Park, California: Sage.

Geertz, C. (1973). *The interpretation of cultures*. New York: Basic Books.

Janesick, V.J. (1994). The dance of qualitative research design, in Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. (Eds.). *Handbook of Qualitative Research.* Thousand Oaks, California: Sage, pp. 209-219.

Lancy, D. (1993). Qualitative Research in Education: An Introduction to the Major Traditions. White Plains, New York: Longman.

Lincoln, Y.S. & Guba, E.G. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry.* Newbury Park, California: Sage.

McKenna, M. (1994). That's not my role, really: Hazards in entering the field and developing a role in contract research. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Session: "Applied Ethnography in a Post-Modern World: Negotiating Stakeholder and Anthropologist Rights in Federal Contract Research," Atlanta, Georgia, (Dec. 4)

Miles, M.B. & Huberman, A. M. (1994) *Qualitative Data Analysis: An expanded sourcebook.* Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.

Figure 1: Summary of Three CSAP Projects

	CLC Project Louisville, Kentucky	BBB Project Ronan, Montana	Child Developm't Proj. Oakland, California
Sponsoring Agency	Catholic Diocese of Greater Louisville Area, Protestant groups	Confederated Salish Kootenai Tribal Council	Developmental Studies Center, an independent non-profit agency
Target Population	Youth aged 12-14 and their parents	Members of 9 communities on the Flathead Reservation (adults & youth, Anglo & Native Amer)	Students in grades K-5 and their teachers in selected schools (California, Kentucky, New York, & Florida).
Intervention	Working through congregations, groups of teenagers & their parents take part in workshops on communicaton skills, parenting, AOD refusal skills	A planning group for each community designs activities for youth & parents: fostering Native American culture, & enhancing self-reliance skills	Teachers receive extensive training in cooperative learning, literature-based writing, and developmental discipline. They teach using these skills.
Issues raised	-- The need for a "safety net" after exposing problems. -- The effects of a strong leader. -- Resiliency of people active in their church group.	-- The fostering of Native American culture in small populations. -- Community/tribal divisions. -- Effectiveness of outsider programs.	-- Interface of project with KERA (Kentucky Educational Reform Act). -- Provision of recess time for children. -- Project fidelity to a complex model, esp. during expansion phase.

Figure 2: Summary of findings from Project Videos

	CLC Project Louisville, Kentucky	BBB Project Ronan, Montana	Child Development Project: Oakland, CA
Intended Audience	New participants in Family Networks	U of Wisconsin & PBS viewing audience	Stakeholders: Board, teachers, parents.
Key elements	Testimonials from participants. Viewers participate in ongoing training program. Emotional impact: Real people are helped.	Awareness of dimension of existing problems: alcoholism, suicide, denial, shame, discrimination. Emotional impact: effects devastating.	Examples of cooperative learning in younger & older elementary grades. Emotional impact: soft, soothing pace can lead to a "caring community".
Main Message	AOD prevention works, esp. when: -- planners are professionals -- Genuine caring and sharing exists -- Honest effort solves problems.	Solutions come from within the group and are based upon Native American traditional ways. Tribal history is a source of pride and AOD resiliency.	Cooperative learning can be effective if handled by a skilled and caring teacher. These strategies help children grow up more adjusted, healthy & happy.
Issues raised	-- Can this program be effective with all kinds of people (esp. shy or withdrawn)? -- How long will the Project be prepared to support solutions to family problems?	-- How can the cycle of negativity & shame be broken? -- Can outsiders help a situation that has been the result of centuries of broken promises & neglect?	-- Is present schooling too competitive? -- How can children learn from visual & other experience? -- Can school experience be better?
Special elements	Group meetings catch the emotion of parents and children sharing feelings about each other.	The emphasis upon "healing" provides a more positive basis for action. The need for adults to "model appropriate behavior" for youth comes out clearly.	Close-in views of children working on engaging lessons provides excitement with their curiosity and basic innocence.